

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee  
February 22, 2023

Kurt Weisheit  
Terryville, CT

Honorable Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

**OPPOSE: Proposed H.B. No. 5653 – AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GUN VIOLENCE AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM GRANTS**

I am writing in opposition to Proposed H.B. No. 5653, which establishes an excise tax on ammunition and would “dedicate the revenue generated from such tax to fund grants through the community gun violence intervention and prevention program.” Firearms and ammunition are ALREADY subject to an additional 11% tax on top of the CT sales tax, so this outrageous new tax is purely designed to be punitive. It would serve to limit the rights of Connecticut citizens by suppressing legal firearm ownership and deterring lawful usage.

I also believe such a tax would produce a disparate impact upon low income gun owners. The ability to practice and maintain proficiency with a firearm would be seriously hindered if this tax is imposed. If a person of low economic means cannot regularly train with their firearms, a safety concern is created. This situation would be counterintuitive to the goal of this bill. Furthermore, “[a] tax is no less discriminatory because it is labeled as an indirect “excise” tax instead of a direct tax; whenever a tax’s implementation produces an actual disparate impact on a racial minority, that tax should be unlawful because it hinders a citizen’s economic rights.”<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, this tax is anti-business as it could put Connecticut firearm and ammunition dealers out of business, further increasing the economic decline of our state. This would cause a loss of revenue to the general fund, as the current 6.35% sales tax rate already imposed upon sales of ammunition would be lost as well. Income and property taxes collected from such businesses would also be lost if they are forced to close down. This bill would do nothing to prevent “gun violence”, rather it would only punish responsible gun owners for the actions of criminals.

I urge members to vote AGAINST this bill.

Respectfully,

Kurt Weisheit

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<sup>1</sup> Brent Droze. (2018, Feb 19). *Race-Neutral Taxation: Using Disparate Impact Theory to Ensure Racially Equitable Taxation*. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/race-law-a-critical-analysis/race-neutral-taxation-using-disparate-impact-theory-to-ensure-racially-equitable-taxation-bb0c5db2ac00>